



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Washington, DC 20240

FEB 07 2019

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors
Attention: Agency Superintendents
Regional Fire Management Officers
Human Resource Officers

From: Acting Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Subject: 2019 Fire Season DOI Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Update

The Department of the Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program (DOI MSP) Policy Memorandum 2016-014 pertaining to requirements for fire season 2019 for all bureaus can be found at <https://elips.doi.gov/elips/0/doc/4499/Page1.aspx>.

All wildland firefighters with an **arduous** fitness rating on their Incident Qualification Card (Red Card) will be required to participate in the Department of the Interior, Medical Standards Program (DOI MSP). All wildland fire suppression programs within the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Tribal organizations are required to follow this direction.

Please refer to OWF Policy Memorandum 2019-004 for updates pertaining to the 2019 fire season. Here are a few key points for BIA and Tribal Organizations:

Medical Qualification Expiration Date and Periodicity

The following information has been added to the 2019 Red Book:

A baseline or periodic exam is required every 36-months from the date of the exam regardless of the qualification date. Annual self-certifications between periodic exams must be completed within 12-months of the previous medical qualification date. Supervisors may order a self-certification for employees prior to the 12-month expiration of the last medical qualification to accommodate unit level alignment of recertification schedule (RT-130, medical qualification or work capacity testing). A self-certification must precede the arduous work capacity test by no more than 45 days prior to fitness testing. If a Department of the Interior arduous duty wildland firefighter (WLFF) develops a change in medical status between periodic medical exams or self-certifications, the WLFF is required to immediately report this change to his/her supervisor and report it at the time of the next medical exam or self-certification. Changes in medical status that require reporting are:

- *Injury or illness which may prevent performance of arduous duty.*
- *Expiration of periodic medical exam or self-certification.*

Medical Screening for Light and Moderate Fitness

Fire Management Officers (or delegate) may request Health Screening Questionnaires (HSQ) for light and moderate fitness participants through the Client Access System (CAS). Light and moderate will be a new EXAM TYPE that can be selected. Once units enter light and moderate personnel into CAS, individuals will receive an e-mail from Comprehensive Health Services Inc. (CHSi) with instructions on how to set up an Examinee Access System (EAS) account. Once the EAS account is set up, the individual can complete the Health Screening Questionnaire (HSQ) online in EAS. If there are no YES answers on the HSQ, the individual will be cleared and have access to the "certificate of clearance" for the light or moderate WCT immediately. If not cleared, CHSi will follow-up with the individual and solicit supporting health information for clearance. Encourage CAS users and light and moderate personnel to engage in the process early. In the rare instance where people/units need to complete paper copies, the FMO or delegate will contact DOI Medical Standards Customer Service by phone at (888) 286-2521 or by e-mail at wlfcsr@blm.gov. Further information can be found at https://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/.

Self-certification and Validating Firefighter Information

The auto-notification feature which notified personnel to complete their self-certification will be discontinued. DOI MSP is working with CHSi to make self-certifications "readily available" within a given time frame. CAS users and personnel will need to determine when to access EAS to complete the self-certification.

Units will need to validate personnel profiles in CAS are accurate and up-to-date. Constant monitoring and managing CAS profiles is important to ensure efficient customer service to our personnel.

Questions regarding the DOI MSP can be e-mailed to wlfcsr@blm.gov or by phone at (888) 286-2521, or Leon W. Ben, Jr., Safety Program Manager, at (602) 379-6798 or Leon.Ben@bia.gov

Attachment:

1. Office of Wildland Fire Policy Memorandum 2019-004



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

NOV 28 2018

OWF POLICY MEMORANDUM 2019-004

To: Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, National Park Service
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
Director, U.S. Geological Survey

From: Jeffery R. Rupert - Director, Office of Wildland Fire

Subject: 2019 Fire Season DOI Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Process

The Department of the Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program (DOI MSP) Policy Memorandum 2016-014 pertaining to requirements for fire season 2019 for all bureaus can be found at <https://elips.doi.gov/elips/0/doc/4499/Page1.aspx>. Bureau of Land Management Team Rubicon Crews will remain exempt until fire season 2020. Additional DOI MSP guidance is provided below:

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Emergency Firefighter/ Administratively Determined (EFF/AD) Personnel in Alaska

Full implementation of DOI MSP in Alaska for BLM EFF/AD personnel will take place in 2019. Medical exams will be initiated November 2018, carried-out through March 2019 in all Alaska zones. The DOI MSP is working directly with BLM AFS to support successful implementation.

Medical Qualification Expiration Date and Periodicity

It has become necessary to clarify DOI MSP intent on medical qualification currency. Current DOI policy requires arduous duty firefighters complete an exam every three years with self-certification during the off years. Three-year periodicity is based on the date of the actual exam. Annual self-certifications between periodic exams must be completed within 12-months of the previous medical qualification date. If an employee's medical qualification expires prior to successfully clearing a periodic exam or self-certification they are no longer medically qualified. Bureau specific guidance should be developed to clarify the operational impact of expiring medical qualification.

CDC/NIOSH Funded University of Montana Study of DOI Medical Standards Data

Over the next two years the DOI MSP will work collaboratively with University of Montana to support the following firefighter health research objectives:

1. Investigate cross-sectional relationships between occupational exposure to wildland firefighting and markers of cardiovascular and respiratory health and hearing assessed in DOI MSP medical screening examinations between 2014 and current.
2. Evaluate longitudinal impacts of wildland firefighting prior to the first available examination and between examinations on the markers of cardiovascular and respiratory health and hearing described above. Collection of repeated measures of wildland firefighter health will be achieved through review of past DOI MSP medical screening data occurring between 2004-2011 and 2014 to current.

Medical Screening for Light and Moderate Fitness

Beginning in January 2019, the medical screening process for light and moderate fitness testing will be centralized and automated through our national contractor Comprehensive Health Services Inc. (CHSi). Fire Management Officers (or delegate) may request Health Screening Questionnaires (HSQ) for light and moderate fitness participants through the Client Access System (CAS). Participants will be sent log-in information to access and complete the HSQ via the CHSi Employee Access System (EAS) on-line. If significant health issues are identified on the HSQ, CHSi will contact the participant to recommend the appropriate supporting medical information. The participant is responsible for any cost related to obtaining additional medical information; the OF178 exam will no longer be used. Once cleared on the HSQ, the participant will receive a certificate of clearance to participate in the Work Capacity Test.

Validating Firefighter Information in the CHSi CAS

The CHSi CAS is the contracted system for managing and storing firefighter information related to medical exams. CAS also acts as a notification system to help managers and firefighters complete and track steps in the medical qualification process. Therefore, maintenance of up-to-date information, including contact information for all units is crucial. Key items to validate when updating a profile in CAS include:

- Ensuring proper EFF/AD designation is checked in CAS for all examinees as appropriate. This will help ensure the proper funding source is utilized for those medical exam costs.
- Verifying active status. Individuals no longer participating in arduous duty, or no longer affiliated with a unit should be changed to inactive. Users and managers of users left in active status will continue to receive notifications.
- Updating firefighters' contact information, including e-mails and telephone numbers.

Contacts: Any questions can be directed to L. Kaili McCray, DOI MSP Manager at kmccray@fws.gov or 208-387-5810.

cc: Fire Executive
Fire Directors